

PART V - SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Preference in Hiring

RL, its contractors, and subcontractors whose contracts are equal to or exceed \$500,000 in value, will give a continuing hiring preference, to the extent practicable, for filling job vacancies to workers who:

- Meet the eligibility criteria (Job Attachment Test) of this plan; and
- Are equally qualified for the job at the time the work is to begin; and
- Have each year signified their desire to retain hiring preference; and
- Have been involuntarily separated within the DOE complex as a result of restructuring; or
- Have been voluntarily separated at Hanford as a result of work force restructuring and used the Training and Education Assistance program, as set forth in the Plan. (Priority in filling vacancies will be given to involuntarily separated workers over voluntarily separated workers.)

Such preference shall be consistent with applicable law, Veteran's preference rights, employment seniority plans or practices of the Department of Energy, Section 3152 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991, and the terms of any court-mandated affirmative action plans. This preference does not outweigh other preferences required by statute or executive order.

This preference is not applicable in situations where positions become available through an outsourcing action or follow-on contract in which the current employees should first be offered their same or similar jobs with the replacement contractor in order to avoid a layoff.

Training and Education

Internal Retraining for New Missions including Cleanup

Work Force planning should identify training needs and provide training to transition the existing work force to new missions as early in the restructuring process as possible. To the extent practicable, workers affected by restructuring shall receive retraining for cleanup or other new missions.

- Training should be aimed at jobs for which vacancies are expected in the near term;
- Training should be completed within a reasonable time-frame in relationship to those vacancies, not more than six months; and
- Training should be completed at a reasonable cost, not to exceed \$10,000 including tuition, course materials and related instructional costs, and excluding the trainee's salary.

Post-Employment Training and Education

The intent of post-employment, external training and educational assistance is to enable displaced workers to obtain employment with private business and industry. This benefit is only available to involuntarily laid off workers who meet the Plan eligibility criteria, and workers who are approved for voluntary reduction of force and select an eligible severance option.

- Eligibility for education assistance allowance will cease if the separated worker is hired by an employer who provides educational assistance benefits, including the DOE or one of its contractors or subcontractors, and the employee is eligible for that benefit. Changes to this provision are applicable to all employees currently eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- The DOE will provide a maximum total training and education assistance allowance per eligible voluntarily or involuntarily separated worker of \$10,000. This allowance will be available for a period up to three years from the date of separation. Initial registration must occur within one year of separation, extendable up to nine months if the separated worker can show enrollment caps precluded entry during the first year following separation. Changes to this provision are applicable to all employees currently eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- Educational institutions must be state-certified or Veteran's Administration approved. Institutions providing degree programs must be accredited by accrediting agencies recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). Educational institutions may include universities, community colleges, vocational schools, and technical schools.
- The education assistance allowance under this plan will be subject to Federal Income Tax (FIT) and Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) tax.

Outplacement Assistance

The DOE and its principal contractors will provide outplacement assistance for regular employees who are identified for layoff or are separated from employment through a VROF or an IROF. Outplacement assistance will also be provided for subcontractors and intermittent workers who are separated from employment through an IROF. Contractor-provided outplacement services will be available to separated workers for a period of one year following the date of layoff or until they are gainfully employed, whichever comes first. After the first year, continuing outplacement services may be available through Columbia Basin College and the Dislocated Worker Program of the Employment Security Department.